

**MINUTES OF A QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE
GREATER LONDON FORUM OF U3As
FRIDAY 12 MARCH 2010 at 12.30 p.m.
at CLORE MANAGEMENT CENTRE, BIRKBECK COLLEGE WC1**

PRESENT:

Bexley	Jo Livingston
Croydon	Mary Randall
Ealing	Barbara Day
Enfield	Judy Hunt
Hackney	Pauline Kingston
Harrow	Glenys Tuersley (Chairman)
Harrow	Gwen Wright (Vice-Chairman, London North)
Merton	Jill Moore
North London	Jenny Clark
North London	Barry Davies
North London	Audrey Jancovich (also representing Haringey)
Orpington	Ann Downes
South London	Pauline Ryall
South London	Barbara Ellis
South London	Maggie Smith (Vice-Chairman, London South)
U3A in London	Jenny Bartlett
U3A in London	Phyllis Rosenberg
Wandsworth	Monica Chalmers

The Chairman thanked Maggie Smith for chairing the meeting so ably on 29 January.

1. Apologies for absence

Valerie Norris (Hammersmith/Fulham), Mike Black (Ealing), Lotte Newman (U3A in London), Jennifer Anning (Kingston), Harry Evans (Croydon), Donald Elliott (Brent).

2. Minutes of Last Meeting – 29 January 2010

There were the following amendments:

- Jenny Bartlett was present at the last meeting and not absent as shown in the minutes
- Bob Walters the new Chairman of Orpington attended for the first time.
- Conference 24 October 2009: Amend sentence to read "*The room ventilation was poor and too small*". Add: "*Maggie Smith had suggested other people should look for new venues but had received no feedback so far.*"
- Report on EDC Meeting 28 October: Amend first sentence as follows: "*Jenny Clark read out a report on the meeting which included starting a new U3A, the role of U3As and how to set up a new U3A.*"
- Reports from U3As: Amend first sentence to read "*Maggie Smith suggested....*"
- Festival of Learning – date had been omitted.
- SLPs: Amend first sentence - "*Keith Richards reported that some....*".
- Olympic Games: amend to "*.....of the Thames River Path*".
- Grundtvig: Amend to read "*Maggie Smith spoke about the International SLP 'The Mythology of the European Shopping Basket'*".

The minutes were agreed as a true record with the above amendments.

3. Matters Arising

- Non-payment of subscriptions: Treasurer has not advised whether he has

received payment from U3As who hadn't paid.

- EDC: Zazia Pratt has a folder to take people through step by step in setting up a new U3A. Perhaps existing U3As could also benefit from this information.
- Reports from U3As: Maggie Smith was having trouble in finding out the official representatives for each U3A. All attendees at this meeting gave their e-mail addresses to Paula Kingston who would type up and send to Maggie.
- Olympic Games: There should be a notice in the next U3A News with photos of people walking along the Thames River path. Network walking organisers and network canals organisers were needed.
- Grundtvig: Mary Randall had now joined the team and will be going to Barcelona on 19 March. Contract had to be re-negotiated every time there was a change and so it was important that members of this group remained committed.

4. Chairman's Report

Glenys Tuersley introduced her report and made the following points:

- She apologised for her absence at the last meeting. Encouragement should be given to new members of U3As to attend the GLF. Harrow AGM was taking place next week and attendees would be encouraged to come to GLF meetings.
- Next GLF Meeting – 4 June 2010
This GLF meeting was very soon after the last one but Jennifer Anning did not want to change dates with the Birkbeck as we are very glad of their continuing support for us. The June date needed to be confirmed with the OU. Jenny Clark would e-mail a contact name to the Chairman. GT would also contact Jill Aldred to see what happened last year.
- Georgian Study Day on 13 February
This had been very successful but many applicants had to be turned away because the venue in the Foundlings Museum was too small although this had given more chance of dialogue between the speaker and the audience. The lecturer, Alan Green, is prepared to take another session and people turned down this time should be given preference for the next session which could possibly be arranged in January/February 2011. Glenys would contact Jennifer Anning to arrange.
- Regional Meeting
Chairman had had a meeting with Jill Moore and Zazia Pratt on 17 February to discuss plans for a regional meeting which will take at the U3A in London, Hampstead Old Town Hall. The Third Age Trust is the host of this meeting and on behalf of them Jill Moore has invited members of the BOB to attend. It is hoped that as wide a selection of the membership will attend, not just Committee members. This meeting will be a good opportunity to get members more involved in running activities. The theme will be "No Member Left Out: Getting Involved in the U3A and Reaping the Benefit" and Ian Searle (Chairman TAT) is the Keynote Speaker. Maggie Smith will be doing a session on how to find new group leaders.
- New U3As
Areas which do not have a U3A were also discussed at the meeting with Zazia Pratt and Jill Moore, as Mike Long is anxious to open new U3As in areas which do not currently have them. Kensington & Chelsea, Stratford and Dulwich had been identified as possible locations. Jill Aldred is now in contact with Zazia concerning Kensington.

Jenny Clark reported there had been interest in Islington but after several meetings it didn't look as though this would go ahead at the moment. There is a lot of work involved in setting up a new U3A but Zazia and Jenny are still keeping in touch with their contact there. Jill Aldred knows someone who would like to start a U3A in Kensington and had been referred to Zazia. Everyone should keep their eyes open for opportunities to open new U3As and keep the Chairman and Zazia Pratt informed.

The Lambeth U3A had closed but Zazia Pratt is hoping to re-launch it.

Barking & Dagenham and Havering used to send representatives to the GLF meetings but have not come for some time as it was probably too far.

Tower Hamlets U3A attended one GLF meeting but haven't been since although they are members of the GLF. Jill Moore had presented them with a Certificate of Membership last October.

The Regional Conference would be a good opportunity for these U3As to renew contact with the GLF.

- SLPs

Keith Richards was unable to be present today but he had submitted a report on 'Meet the Writers' event at Brunel University on 3 February 2010.

- Diary Dates

(a) DANA Alliance, Wellcome Trust Lecture Hall, Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, 24 March 2010, 2 p.m. – 4.30 p.m., £12.50; tickets available from National Office who have apologised for the late notification to us of this event. Please encourage members to attend. The title was: 'Staying Sharp – Neuroethics: What is Right and What is Wrong'. Moderator is Vivien Parry, science writer and broadcaster on Radio 4. Further details are on the national website and tickets can be obtained by telephone Lin Jonas.

(b) Royal Institution lecture, Albemarle Street, 30 March at 2 – 5 p.m., £15, 3 lectures.

(c) TAT AGM, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, 11 a.m. on 9 September – This was a single day event as this year there was to be no conference.

(d) GLF Autumn Conference, 9 October, Hampstead Old Town Hall, Belsize Park. First time we have had a Science Day and there are good speakers.

Maggie Smith asked what happened to Peter Anning's e-mails that he sends out. Many U3As did not circulate these notices within their U3As. Discussion took place on members accessing the National Office website to see what papers had been issued by them. Although local Secretaries were sent papers to be circulated, it seemed that not many secretaries were aware they had to pass this information on.

- Hilary Greenwood

Hilary Greenwood was extremely ill. We have sent a card from the GLF and Pam King will forward on messages and cards – people should contact her at 65 Hilliard Road, Northwood, HA6 1SJ.

5. Treasurer's Report

Copies had been circulated. The Grundtvig money should have been kept separate but expenses were in Euros and Sterling and transfers have to take place between the two accounts. The Treasurer would do this at the end of the year.

6. Regional Trustee Report

- Regional Conference

Jill Moore gave her report orally. The conference had the theme: "No member left out: getting involved in U3A and reaping the benefit". She had originally tried to have the Regional meeting in September at the Friends' Meeting House for this event. However, the date had been too close to the GLF Conference in

October and so the Regional Conference would now take place on 24 June in Hampstead Old Town which was a cheaper venue than the Friends' Meeting House. Ian Searle had agreed to be the Keynote Speaker but he has not advised the title of his talk yet. A buffet lunch would be served at 12.30 p.m. and the meeting would start at 1.30 p.m. and the charge would be £5 whether attendees took advantage of the lunch or not.

There had been a great increase in membership of the U3A and— there were now 740 U3As nationally. The capitation fee was going up to £3.50 in April this year. There was therefore a chance to re-assess the U3A situation and these Regional meetings should help find out what U3As and their members think. They would be open to all members and it would be a chance for them to find out more about the role of the Trust and the services offered by the National Office. The venue holds 200 people and it was hoped that there would be a good Question & Answer session to involve the audience as much as possible.

Glenys said that Ian Searle felt that the U3A was as much a social organisation as an educational one and U3As differ very much throughout the UK depending on where they are based. Ian was very keen to include all types. Social groups could be 'feeders' for more intellectual groups.

Ian Searle and Barbara Lewis think that no adult should be left out. So far the U3A only attracted a very small percentage of the potential population.

Post Office

The Post Office was holding a public awareness day on 28 April and had asked Jill for two members of the U3A to attend. Gwen Wright volunteered. Jill suggested that people e-mail her or Gwen with their problems.

7. **Report on meeting at Brunel University 3 February 2010 – “Meet the Writers”**

Keith Richards had circulated a report before the meeting. Maggie Smith said the meeting with the two speakers, David Lodge and Jim Crace, had been excellent although Jim Crace had tried to pigeon-hole the U3A by saying that not all were articulate middle-class graduates. However, there had been wine but food offered, and the meeting by students of the attendees at Uxbridge Station had been badly organised.

The next event was on Friday 19 March at 4.30 p.m. at the LSE when Caryl Phillips would be speaking. A notice had been circulated to U3As. The Brunel SLP had four existing Literature groups participating and four SLP groups, of which Gwen Wright is one of the co-ordinators, and so in total there were about 90-100 U3A members participating in this project.

8. **Development Team Report: Workshop 2 March 2010**

This report was given orally by Audrey Jancovich. At long last the Development Team had managed to run this Study Day entitled “Reaching out to the wider community” which was very different to the conference which Jill Moore is organising. The team study day was about the ways of attracting members from a broader social spectrum.

The three speakers were Ellen Lebeth, Chairman of the Equalities & Diversity Committee of LOPSG, Zazia Pratt of the National Education & Development Team and Doug Jones from Porthcawl U3A who had a wide and in-depth knowledge of life-long learning (his speech is attached). Fourteen people had attended in addition to the speakers and Judy Hunt, Brenda Whittaker and Audrey Jancovich of the Development Team.

The idea to hold a study day had been initiated by Patience Champion. Audrey thanked Gwen Wright who had done a lot of work towards the day and also Judy Hunt and Brenda Whittaker for the enormous amount of work they had done.

The participants had been divided into four groups to discuss certain questions. This had the benefit of having time to question the speakers about issues such as why do we not cover a broader spectrum of the population.

It was disappointing that none of the attendees asked to join the Development Team because currently there are only three members although it was hoped that a former member might return to the Team.

The most positive thing about the day was the pleasant atmosphere. Maggie Smith and Jill Moore agreed. The venue was a nice room in Brixton and the weather had been beautiful. It was now important to keep the issues alive.

Glenys asked what the speakers had thought of the efforts of the U3A so far. Audrey replied that the all speakers thought it would be of benefit to the U3A if we had a broader spectrum of the population as members and it was particularly important to get younger people to join. The U3A should be for the whole community.

18 people had applied to attend and 14 attended on the day (12 ladies and 2 men) from 11 U3As. Four or five were at the younger end of the age range and there was an ethnic mix as well. Immediate follow-up action was to do a report for the attendees and to send an item to the U3A News and then to think about the next steps. Glenys asked if this would be annual event and Audrey replied that it was hoped so.

Judy Hunt reported that on the evaluation forms six people had shown interest in attending another Study Day. Maggie Smith thought that London was the first area to have conducted such a day and added she thought an article could be of interest to Sources. Audrey thought that other regions could benefit from having such a Study Day.

Glenys commented that when Harrow U3A had first been set up the Jewish community had admitted that their parents wouldn't have thought it would be something for them but now this community was a significant part of Harrow U3A.

Many Asian people were keen to do U3A computer courses but didn't understand they had to join the U3A first, which was an organisation they knew nothing about.

Audrey mentioned that Ellen Lebeth had been keen not to people in a particular box.

9. **News from U3As**

- Glenys asked that committee members should give some publicity to the U3A in London's Easter Conference on 15 – 17 April. The contact was Sofie Landau, U3A in London.

10. **Any other Business**

- Maggie Smith reported that SE London U3A is linked to Goldsmiths' College where rooms are available on Saturdays. Transport is very good and the East London Line will open after June. Perhaps we should look into this. The nearest stations are New Cross and New Cross Gate. Maggie undertook to find out more information to bring to the next meeting.
- There was a venue in Croydon, five minutes from East Croydon station, which could seat 170 people. Cost was £30 per hour.
- Glenys reported that the GLF needed a permanent Secretary, it was very difficult to run the GLF without one and suggested that Committee members ask around their U3As to see if someone would be willing to take on this important role.
- An EDC South of the River, which is part of Mike Long's network, is required. This person would be the local contact for Zazia Pratt, who covers Southern England, and they would be required to attend meetings called by Mike Long. Maggie Smith would check with Zazia as to who should write to the Chairmen of U3As south of the river to see if any of their members would be willing to take this role on. It could be an interesting position. Maggie would also ask Zazia if there was a job description. Jenny Clark advised there was a job description. Glenys suggested that this position should be advertised in local newsletters and if anyone was interested in considering taking on this role, they should contact National Office to see what was involved.

Date & Place of Next Meeting

Friday 4 June 2010 at the Open University, Hawley Crescent, London NW1. This venue needed to be confirmed. Glenys will speak to Jill Aldred to check whether or not the room at the OU has been booked.

The meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.